11/17/94

REHEARSALS WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY,NOVEMBER 8 AND TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15 FROM 7:30-8:30 P.M. THESE WERE THE ONLY DATES I COULD GET AS OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS HAVE ALREADY RESERVED THE SPACE.

ZAMI CELEBRATES THE WORK OF AUDRE LORDE!

USES OF THE EROTIC: THE READINGS WILL REVOLVE AROUND CERTAIN PASSAGES FROM THIS TEXT.

PROGRAM WILL BE HELD AT THE FIRST EXISTENTIALIST CONGREGATION LOCATED AT 470 CANDLER PARK DRIVE NEAR LITTLE FIVE POINTS,THEY ARE DONATING THE SPACE AND ARE ONE OF OUR CO-SPONSORS, ALONG WITH CHARIS AND SPELMAN'S LESBIAN AND BISEXUAL ALLIANCE.

WE WILL UTILIZE THE STAGE FOR MUCH OF THE PROGRAM- THE NARRATOR WILL SPEAK FROM THE PODIUM ON THE FLOOR. WE WILL USE CANDLELIGHT ON STAGE AND OTHER DECORATIVE ITEMS- WE WILL NEED 3 STOOLS, A TABLE, CANDLES, MATCHES AND A FRAMED PRINT OF AUDRE LORDE.

QUINN WILL VIDEOTAPE THE PROGRAM.

THE PROGRAM WILL OPEN WITH FELICIA SINGING "WOMAN HOLD MY HAND" CARLA WILL DANCE UP THE AISLE AND ONTO THE STAGE-FINISHING THE DANCE AS FELICIA FINISHES THE SONG.

AT EACH BREAK IN THE PROGRAM B.J. WILL DRUM ALONG WITH STACEY PLAYING THE TAMBORINE AS EACH PERSON PREPARES TO PRESENT. IT WILL BE VERY BRIEF. THEN WE WILL UTILIZE AUDRE LORDE'S RECORDED VOICE TO INTRODUCE EACH PIECE AS SHE READS FROM USES OF THE EROTIC.

GRETCHEN AS NARRATOR INTRODUCES THE PROGRAM: WELCOME-TALKS ABOUT ZAMI, THANKS CO-SPONSORS, READS SHORT BIO ON LORDE, AND CONCLUDES PROGRAM.

SHARON AND GARNEDA SITTING ON STOOLS OPPOSITE EACH OTHER WILL READ POETRY FROM UNDERSONG:

SISTER, MORNING IS A TIME FOR MIRACLES P.196
AND DON'T THINK I WON'T BE WAITING P.165
MEMORIAL 111-FROM A PHONE BOOTH ON BROADWAY P.163
NOW P.162
LOVE POEM P. 141
MOVEMENT SONG P.119
DEAR TONI P.106

LOVE, MAYBE P.89

AUDRE LORDE CELEBRATION CONT-P.2

JACKIE WILL PLAY ACOUSTIC BASS WITH CARLA DANCING.
(A SELECTION FROM COLTRANE)

PIECE FROM ZAMI" PERFORMED BY ?, ENDING WITH FELICIA SINGING"SOMETIMES" OR THE RECORDING BY SWEET HONEY. AT THE END OF HER PERFORMANCE,THE WOMAN WILL STAND STILL AND THE SONG WILL BEGIN; TRACEY WILL THEN COME ON STAGE AND START SLOW-DANCING WITH HER AND THEN COUPLE BY COUPLE WILL COME ON STAGE UNTIL THERE ARE SIX COUPLES DRESSED IN BLACK SLOW-DANCING IN A CIRCLE AROUND THIS COUPLE. ONE BY ONE THIS COUPLE WILL DEPART UNTIL THE ORIGINAL COUPLE IS LEFT AND THE SONG ENDS. THIS WILL CONCLUDE THIS PART OF THE PROGRAM.

THE AUDIENCE WILL BE ASKED IF THEY WISH TO LIGHT A CANDLE OR TALK ABOUT AUDRE LORDE AND ANY FEELINGS THE PROGRAM MAY HAVE INVOKED IN THEM.

"ZAMI"

I REMEMBER AFREKETE, WHO CAME OUT OF A DREAM TO ME ALWAYS BEING HARD AND REAL AS THE FINE HAIRS ALONG THE UNDEREDGE OF MY NAVEL. SHE BROUGHT ME LIVE THINGS FROM THE BUSH, AND FROM HER FARM SET OUT IN COCOYAMS AND CASSAVA-THOSE MAGICAL FRUIT WHICH KITTY BOUGHT IN THE WEST INDIAN MARKETS ALONG LENOX AVENUE IN THE 140S OR IN THE PUERTO RICAN BODEGAS WITHIN THE BUSTLING MARKET OVER ON PARK AVENUE AND 116TH STREET UNDER THE CENTRAL RAILROAD STRUCTURES.

WE BOUGHT RED DELICIOUS PIPPINS, THE SIZE OF FRENCH CASHEW APPLES. THERE WERE GREEN PLANTAINS, WHICH WE HALF-PEELED AND THEN PLANTED, FRUIT-DEEP, IN EACH OTHER'S BODIES UNTIL THE PETALS OF SKIN LAY LIKE TENDRILS OF BROAD GREEN FIRE UPON THE CURLY DARKNESS BETWEEN OUR UPSPREAD THIGHS. THERE WERE RIPE RED FINGER BANANAS, STUBBY AND SWEET, WITH WHICH I PARTED YOUR LIPS GENTLY, TO INSERT THE PEELED FRUIT INTO YOUR GRAPE-PURPLE FLOWER.

I HELD YOU, LAY BETWEEN YOUR BROWN LEGS, SLOWLY PLAYING MY TONGUE THROUGH YOUR FAMILIAR FORESTS, SLOWLY LICKING AND SWALLOWING AS THE DEEP UNDULATIONS AND TIDAL MOTIONS OF YOUR STRONG BODY SLOWLY MASHED RIPE BANANA INTO A BEIGE CREAM THAT MIXED WITH THE JUICES OF YOUR ELECTRIC FLESH. OUR BODIES MET AGAIN, EACH SURFACE TOUCHED WITH EACH OTHER'S FLAME, FROM THE TIPS OF OUR CURLED TOES TO OUR TONGUES, AND LOCKED INTO OUR OWN WILD RHYTHMS, WE RODE EACH OTHER ACROSS THE THUNDERING SPACE, DRIPPED LIKE LIGHT FROM THE PEAK OF EACH OTHER'S TONGUE.

WE WERE EACH OF US BOTH TOGETHER. THEN WE WERE APART, AND SWEAT SHEENED

OUR BODIES LIKE SWEET OIL.

"ZAMI" CONT P-3

I TOOK A RIPE AVOCADO AND ROLLED IT BETWEEN MY HANDS UNTIL THE SKIN BECAME A GREEN CASE FOR THE SOFT MASHED FRUIT INSIDE, HARD PIT AT THE CORE. I ROSE FROM A KISS IN YOUR MOUTH TO NIBBLE A HOLE IN THE FRUIT SKIN NEAR THE NAVEL STALK, SQUEEZED THE PALE YELLOW-GREEN FRUIT JUICE IN THIN RITUAL LINES BACK AND FORTH OVER AND AROUND YOUR COCONUT-BROWN BELLY.

THE OIL AND SWEAT FROM OUR BODIES KEPT THE FRUIT LIQUID, AND I MASSAGED IT OVER YOUR THIGHS AND BETWEEN YOUR BREASTS UNTIL YOUR BROWNESS SHONE LIKE A LIGHT THROUGH A VEIL OF THE PALEST GREEN AVOCADO, A MANTLE OF GODDESS PEAR THAT I SLOWLY LICKED FROM YOUR SKIN.

THERE ARE CERTAIN VERITIES WHICH ARE ALWAYS WITH US, WHICH WE COME TO DEPEND UPON. THAT THE SUN MOVES NORTH IN SUMMER, THAT MELTED ICE CONTRACTS, THAT THE CURVED BANANA IS SWEETER. AFREKETE TAUGHT ME ROOTS, NEW DEFINITIONS OF OUR WOMEN'S BODIES-DEFINITIONS FOR WHICH I HAD ONLY BEEN IN TRAINING TO LEARN BEFORE.

WE HAD COME TOGETHER LIKE ELEMENTS ERUPTING INTO AN ELECTRIC STORM, EXCHANGING ENERGY, SHARING CHARGE, BRIEF AND DRENCHING. THEN WE PARTED, PASSED, REFORMED, RESHAPING OURSELVES THE BETTER FOR THE EXCHANGE.

EVERY WOMAN I HAVE EVER LOVED HAS LEFT HER PRINT UPON ME, WHERE I LOVED SOME INVALUABLE PIECE OF MYSELF APART FROM ME-SO DIFFERENT THAT I HAD TO STRETCH AND GROW IN ORDER TO RECOGNIZE HER. AND IN THAT GROWING, WE CAME TO SEPARATION, THAT PLACE WHERE WORK BEGINS.

MY LIFE HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY A BRIDGE AND FIELD OF WOMEN. ZAMI.

ZAMI. A CARRIACOU NAME FOR WOMEN WHO WORK TOGETHER AS FRIENDS AND LOVERS. MA-LIZ, DELOIS, LOUISE BRISCOE, AUNT ANNI, LINDA, AND GENEVIEVE, MAWULISA, THUNDER, SKY, SUN, THE GREAT MOTHER OF US ALL; AND AFREKETE, HER YOUNGEST DAUGHTER, THE MISCHIEVOUS LINGUIST, TRICKSTER, BEST-BELOVED, WHOM WE MUST ALL BECOME.

THEIR NAMES, SELVES, FACES FEED ME LIKE CORN BEFORE LABOR. I LIVE EACH OF THEM AS A PIECE OF ME. ONCE HOME WAS A LONG WAY OFF, A PLACE I HAD NEVER BEEN TO BUT KNEW OUT OF MY MOTHER'S MOUTH. I ONLY DISCOVERED ITS LATITUDES WHEN CARRIACOU WAS NO LONGER MY HOME. THERE IT IS SAID THAT THE DESIRE TO LIE WITH OTHER WOMEN IS A DRIVE FROM THE MOTHER'S BLOOD.